

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

RE: THE DRAWINGS

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner check item 10 of the Office Action Summary sheet in order to indicate that the drawings filed with the application papers have been accepted as being formal.

RE: FOREIGN PRIORITY

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner check item 12 of the Office Action Summary sheet in order to acknowledge the claim for foreign priority made in the present application.

RE: THE INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT (IDS)

It is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider and make of record the Japanese documents JP 59-64043, JP 62-221348, JP 11-89880, and JP 59-124524, cited in the IDS dated May 24, 2006. It appears that the Examiner did not consider the Japanese documents since English language Abstracts of the Japanese documents were not provided. However, it is respectfully pointed out that the Japanese documents were cited in an English language International Search Report (ISR), and an International Preliminary

Report on patentability (IPRP) and Written Opinion (also in English) which are already of record. See the IDS dated September 8, 2006. It is respectfully submitted that the ISR and the IPRP and the Written Opinion constitute an explanation of relevance of the Japanese documents. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner consider and make of record the Japanese documents cited in the IDS dated May 24, 2006.

THE CLAIMS

Independent claim 1 has been amended to recite the subject matter of claim 2 and (now canceled) claim 3, and based on the disclosure in the specification at page 16, lines 14-15. In addition, independent claim 1 has been amended to be put in proper "method" form.

Claim 2 has been amended to recite that the press print processing roller forms the linear pattern elements by squeezing the absorbent body base with a linear pressure of 5.56 to 13.89 kgf/cm, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 19, lines 2-4.

Claim 4 has been amended to recite that the area in the absorbent body base where the linear pattern elements are not formed has a thickness of 3 mm or less, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 19, lines 14-16.

Claim 6 has been amended to recite that the linear pattern elements are formed in an S-shape, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at page 29, line 23 to page 30, line 2.

New claim 7 has been added to recite subject matter based on the disclosure in Fig. 7 and the disclosure in the specification at page 26, line 14 to page 27, line 2.

And new claim 8 has been added to recite that the linear pattern elements are formed in a linear shape as originally disclosed in (now canceled) claim 3.

The claims have also been amended to make some minor grammatical improvements and to correct some minor antecedent basis problems so as better comply with the requirements of 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and it is respectfully requested that the rejection thereunder be withdrawn.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the claims be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of USP 5,925,026 ("Arteman et al") and USP 4,333,979 ("Sciaraffa et al"); and claim 6 was rejected under 35 USC 103 as being obvious in view of the combination of Arteman et al, Sciaraffa et al, and USP 4,443,512 ("Delvaux"). These

rejections, however, are respectfully traversed with respect to the claims as amended hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, there is provided a method for manufacturing an absorbent body. As recited in amended independent claim 1, a stripe-shaped absorbent body base is transferred through a pair of rollers that are provided to be opposed to each other with a predetermined distance therebetween, wherein at least one of the rollers is a press print processing roller that has a plurality of processing projections with a predetermined layout on a circumference surface thereof. In addition, as recited in amended independent claim 1, a plurality of linear pattern elements are formed on at least one surface of the absorbent body base, wherein the linear pattern elements are formed by being squeezed by the processing projections so as to have a groove-like shape, and wherein the plurality of linear pattern elements are individually spaced from one another and dispersed in a staggered manner, and the absorbent body base is cut to have a predetermined size after the linear pattern elements are formed. Still further, as recited in amended independent claim 1, the linear pattern elements are formed in a shape so that an orientation angle, which is a degree of inclination of the linear pattern elements to a transfer direction of the absorbent body base, is 50 degrees or less at any portion, and the linear

pattern elements are arranged so that a predetermined number of the linear pattern elements are formed on each straight line extending in a width direction orthogonal to the transfer direction of the absorbent body base, and so that the linear pattern elements have a fixed distance thereamong in the width direction.

That is, according to the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1, the processing projections are provided on the entire circumference of the press print processing roller so that a predetermined number of the processing projections are disposed on each straight line extending in the width direction orthogonal to the transfer direction of the absorbent body base, and so that the processing projections are disposed to have a fixed distance thereamong in the width direction. When the absorbent body base is transferred through the pair of rollers, linear pattern elements are formed on the absorbent body base such that the predetermined number of the linear pattern elements are formed on each arbitrary straight line extending in the width direction orthogonal to the transfer direction of the absorbent body base, and thereafter, the absorbent body base is cut in a predetermined length to be individually separated. Therefore, with the method of the claimed present invention, at the time of embossing, the linear pressure applied to the absorbent body base by the processing

projections can be maintained at a constant at any time and, as a result, an advantageous effect is produced whereby the press print processing roller can be always driven and rotated in a stable manner. See the disclosure in the specification at page 10, line 14 to page 11, line 5.

In addition, according to the method of the claimed present invention, since the linear pattern elements are formed in a shape so that the orientation angle is 50 degrees or less at any portion, the resistance force that is caused when the absorbent body base is sent out, after the absorbent body base is squeezed by the processing projections, is prevented from being increased. As a result, an inconvenience where the absorbent body base sent through the pair of rollers gets wound around the press roller is eliminated, and another advantageous effect is produced whereby the linear pattern elements are formed by smoothly transferring the absorbent body base. See the disclosure in the specification at page 11, line 7 to page 12, line 2.

On page 4 of the Office Action, with respect to the subject matter of claims 2 and 3 (which is now recited in amended independent claim 1), the Examiner has cited Arteman et al. However, it is respectfully submitted that Arteman et al, either separately or in combination with Sciaraffa et al and Delvaux, does not disclose, teach or suggest the above described features

and advantageous effects of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Arteman et al merely discloses an absorbent pad where different numbers of apertures (20) are formed on arbitrary straight lines extending in the width direction orthogonal to the transfer direction of the absorbent pad. For example, in Arteman et al, four apertures are formed on one line, six apertures are formed on another line, and so on. See Fig. 1 of Arteman et al. Therefore, when the absorbent pad of Arteman et al is to be formed by embossing rollers, the linear pressure will differ greatly depending upon the apertures to be formed, thereby causing vibration due to change in pressure and, as a result, it is respectfully submitted that, contrary to the rollers of the claimed present invention, the embossing rollers for forming the absorbent pad of Arteman et al cannot rotate in a stable manner.

It is respectfully submitted, moreover, that Sciaraffa et al, and Delvaux also do not disclose forming the linear pattern elements as according to the claimed present invention.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that even if all of Arteman et al, Sciaraffa et al, and Delvaux were combinable in the manner suggested by the Examiner, such a combination still would not achieve or render obvious the above described features and advantageous effects of the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in amended independent claim 1 and claims 2, 4, 6-8 depending therefrom clearly patentably distinguishes over Arteman et al, Sciaraffa et al, and Delvaux, taken singly or in combination, under 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,

/Douglas Holtz/

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